

Testimony of Brendan Kruh
Central Connecticut State University Student
Appropriations Committee
February 15, 2017

Good evening members of the Appropriations Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify before you tonight. My name is Brendan Kruh and I am a Junior Finance Major at Central Connecticut State University.

In my time at school I have chosen to pursue a large degree of extra circular involvement, which has allowed me the opportunity to meet students from various walks of life. I have been provided a great education with zero out of pocket expenses on my end due to my loving hard working parents. With that said I am in the very small minority, many of my peers have not been so fortunate and have had to finance their own education.

A dear friend of mine, who is originally from Egypt decided to come to the United States for his higher education and specifically he chose Central Connecticut State University due to its affordability and accessibility. He has had to cycle through several jobs over the years now to pay for his education. When I told him that a 4.4% budget cut was looming and that his tuition could be raised he expressed that in his hardly manageable station he could not sustain an increase. Therefore, the prospect of him returning to finish his senior year given a budget cut will diminish.

I believe that the 4.4% proposed budget cut to the CSCU system is detrimental to not only the students who cannot afford a tuition increase but also to the longevity of our state. As of 2013, 65% of students who attended public higher education institutions graduated with some degree of debt, the average being around \$25,000.00. Many students cannot afford to incur this debt, and struggle to pay for their college education. I know that as we raise the cost of attending our public institutions we will be pricing out a demographic of disadvantaged students. The fact is that roughly 30% of our high school graduates leave the state to attend college elsewhere. As we increase tuition we can expect that this number will grow larger. Students who attend college out of state are more likely to attain employment near where they went to college, than they are to return home. If we continue to increase the cost of tuition our state is in serious jeopardy of losing students who's public education is an investment in our states economic future.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify tonight.